make a contribution to the promotion of professionalism in the following areas: organisation and management pedagogics / didactics dramaturgy and stage management.

Eventually, this was also the opinion of the many who attended the conference, although the eternal lack of funds remains a 'hot issue', especially for those in the former communist countries. At the beginning of the conference the material needs were a point of discussion, but later on this issue was hardly mentioned and emphasis was put on the rallying of expertise.

CONTENT CONFERENCE

The EMF will absolutely put the emphasis on substantial discussions and on the exchange of knowledge. In doing so, the EMF will both compare and provoke, that is to say, there are no limitations as to what can and cannot be shown.

During this conference, the works of Decroux and Meyerhold and their influence on the mime theatre served as the central theme. The year 1991 commemorates the death of Decroux and, due to the Perestroyka, more and more information on Meyerhold can be obtained. As an introduction, Loek Zonneveld delivered a speech on the bio-mechanics of Meyerhold. Preceding the conference, two seminars took place. A workshop of Steven Wasson and Corinne Soum (Decroux techniques), and in cooperation with the Amsterdam Summer University, a workshop of Gennady Bogdanov (bio-mechanics of Meyerhold). Demonstrations of both workshops were given on the first day of the conference.

Yves Marc and Claire Heggen too gave a demonstration of their application of the mime corporel ('musicalité du mouvement').

Personal backgrounds and frames of reference form the basis for the transfer of knowledge. Therefore, the four discussion groups (see page 5) were given an introduction by their chairpersons as such.

The theme-subject 'the ideal school', provided the basis for a dissertation given by Thomas Leabhart (USA), a former assistant of Decroux', on the school of Jacques Copeau, a man who stimulated famous theatre personalities like Mnouchkine, Lecoq and Decroux. Decroux did not invent the corporal mime, but continued to build on what he saw and already found present with Jacques Copeau. Natalja Tabachnikova of the Theatre Union in Moscow introduced the theme 'dramaturgy for mime theatre' from her own position and experience with a center like the Theatre Union which could develop itself thanks to the Perestroyka and which now experiences the growing independence of its artists who detach themselves more and more from her institute. Yves Marc of Théâtre du Mouvement (Fr) introduced 'networking' with an explanation about the present situation in France. Although mime originates from France and has its

roots there, it is not recognized by the public and the authorities as such. He also realizes and acknowledges the fact that this has something to do with the quality of organising and the discord among the French mime players themselves.

Ben Hurkmans (NL) introduced the subject 'acting methods' within the mime. He spoke from his experience and intimate knowledge of a very broad spectrum of different forms of theatre and styles which can only develop themselves in a very favourite cultural climate.

In the Netherlands, two ministries are involved in theatre; the Ministry of Welfare, Health and Culture (WVC) and the Ministry of Education. Art education is an inalienable

right in the Netherlands and the Ministry of WVC offers an essential contribution to the production process of the stage arts. In order to give the foreign visitors a better insight in the (unique) policy with respect to cultural activities in the Netherlands, George Lawson of WVC delivered a speech on culture politics in this country.

PERSPECTIVE FROM EXISTING CONSULTATION STRUCTURES

Until recently, only the Nederlands Mime Centrum was known to function professionally. But there is more: before long, the Mime Centrum Berlin will officially open its doors. In London, the Mime Action Group (MAG) which has existed for several years, can now begin to work professionally thanks to a subsidy (1990). During the last few years, the Theatre Union in Moscow has developed a consistent organisational and artistic policy, aimed at a professional education. There are plans in Périgueux to set up a mime centre for the whole of France. Marburg (Germany) wants to establish a documentation/information centre for mime linked to the university and the organisation of the Marburg festival. Early plans to set up a centre in Vienna also exist.

Whatever the case, the conference has put its attendants on a track to further think about the infrastructure of the new organisation in order to develop the art of mime and its position. This year, members will have to do their homework:

- Every country should take stock of the national situation. Countries which do not have a centre of their own will have to create one, one way or the other. This can be done by linking up to the already existing situation.

- Members should be brought in, based on the criteria (articles of association). And:

- Internal discussions should be held.

(From collected data, for example, a catalogue of the European mime/movement art could be compiled as a first step).

REPORT CONFERENCE

STATEMENTS EMF:

Ide van Heiningen (NL): 'What we should try to attain within mime, is the tearing down of the ivory towers in the field of mime; ivory towers with closed doors are synonymous for the isolated way of working by mime players and small companies. In this stage, the EMF is absolutely not helped by the promotion of personal, material needs, but only by an exchange of knowledge and date, by the development of a dramaturgy for mime and by giving information about the various training facilities. Therefore, discussion and exchange should only take place along the lines of the triangle between the art of mime, the mime players and the theatre. There are not many mime players who realise that with mime, they hold the golden egg of the theatrical arts and that they represent an art form which is rich in various movements, all springing from originality. Mime is an avantgarde form of art that also serves as a source of inspiration for other art forms.' Yves Marc (Fr): 'An international organisation can help to come to a better understanding of the present French situation in which there is a lot of discord. Although it is true that France can be regarded as the birthplace of various mime movements, the art form is hardly known by the theatre public. Mime finds itself in a desolate position; there are hardly any subsidies for mime and many mime companies disappear under the heading 'dance' in order to become eligible for a subsidy. Although it may sound

3

paradoxically, an international structure can help to exert influence on the authorities, also in a political sense, so that they will give more privileges to mime and will guarantee its existence.'

Ruud Engelander (NL): 'In its totality you could say that the ship of an international organisation provides self-confidence. Especially when you work isolated or live in a country in which mime is not yet an accepted form of theatre.'

ADDITIONS TO PERSONAL STATEMENTS WITH RESPECT TO THE EMF AS AN **ORGANISATION:** These can be divided into:

- 1. What can the EMF mean in a political sense.
- 2. What can the EMF do for the former communist countries.
- 3. How does the EMF handle the various movements within mime; should mime be redefined.

ad 1. The fact that the EMF could exert its influence on the authorities found a lot of response. Whether it can really function in this respect needs to be seen and is a longterm issue because the organisation is still in a developing stage and politics are for ever subject to change. However, the EMF can always listen carefully and give advice. In this respect, the following issues were mentioned:

- Protesting the signing of a certificate (Endowment of the Arts) in the USA. By signing this, artists promise not to show any obscenities in the theatres.

- The restrictions by the USA on the import of foreign performances.

ad 2. For the time being, money remains a problem for the East European countries. Later on, this issue will be addressed again under the item on contribution and its settling. In this respect, Ruud Engelander pointed out the IETM which has a special fund at its disposal. Furthermore, there is a special subsidy fund for exchange visits with certain countries.

ad 3. Should a new artistic heading be created for mime? There are so many different styles within mime; how are they to be approached? Milan Sladek rejoiced at the open approach by the EMF and the lack of a dividing line between mime and pantomime. 'It is important not only to look ahead, but also to create a new self-consciousness based on history. We must get rid of the bad habit of imposing our artistic vision on others. In this way, we only maintain the characteristic isolation. It would be a very sad thing indeed if we were to leave this gathering as being socially weak, unable to shake off their isolation.'

REPORT DISCUSSION GROUPS What follows is a secundary report. It reflects the notes taken and handed in by the various discussion groups.

A. Research and Information Retrieval on Acting Methods: Aim of this workgroup was the importance of exchanging various acting methods within mime.

Chairman Ben Hurkmans: 'Theatre is a mixture of disciplines. In fact, acting always serves as the central issue, but the way in which one acts and which discipline is used as basis differs. Mime finds itself in between various disciplines and besides mime notations, also uses modern dance, texts and other disciplines.' A short summary of reactions:

Gerard Verwer: 'In what way can we use existing and already developed methods for personal techniques and the final performance. How can we further build on the existing techniques.'

Very often the discussion centred around Decroux, a man who has had an enormous impact on the development of a certain training method within mime - a method which has become detached from the person himself and which has found its way through his students and literature and has spread itself. Ben Hurkmans already mentioned him in his introduction and pointed out the importance of returning to the author from time to time, incorporating him and then choosing your own way. Els Sorber: 'My problem with the Decroux technique is that it is often used as a muscular analysis, but, in practically every case, that is hardly interesting in a theatrical sense. During this training, the mime player should connect himself to his own source, which can exist of the silence in oneself, the instinctive, the space in oneself, emotions, thoughts etc.' Everybody agreed that the mime of Decroux can form a basis for theatre, but that in the creative process one should strive for a greater accessibility. Milan Sladek mentioned Stanislavski as a possible source of inspiration, because it is important to be clear about the things you want to express. 'Theatre is always about communication. It is important to search for the internal motives instead of creating external movements and the development of the actor as body manipulator.' Pal Regös: 'Academic mime, mime that exists by the grace of tradition destroys the student's personality. A man of consequence like Decroux lived in another social context and it is no longer interesting to follow his ideas on theatre. Art should not be detached from its context, the present day society in which it is created." During the first two years of the programme at the Kleine Akademie ('Small Academy') of Luc de Smet in Brussels, the movement is the central theme. 'We experience the world around us through our body.' These first years are meant to examine movement. In doing so, the student is offered various media by which he can be influenced and stimulated. Not until the third year is text being used. This is linked to the movement. Text and movement can stimulate one another.

The need for written pieces for mime and pantomime was expressed, as well as the writing down of existing mime and pantomime plays. The group would like to see an exchange of personal acting methods and techniques.

5